

Chapter 7 Making Daddy fall in Love with Ms Cathy

A crease formed between Arius' brows; his little head turned incredulously. "It wasn't him?"

It couldn't have been the servant either as he and Abner were dragged away by the old man butler last night. Which left only one other person at home: his father, Adrian. If it wasn't him, who else could have been the culprit?

The butler let out a small cough. "Young Master Arius, please come with me."

Shooting a final dubious glance at Adrian, Arius hopped off the desk. Like a seasoned adult, he went after the butler in a strut. His short legs led him to the monitoring room where the butler pulled up a security footage of last night's hallway activities.

From the corner of the screen, Cathy's figure emerged, stumbling out of the bathroom with only a towel wrapped around her body. She seemed befuddled, possibly from having one too many drinks, as she spun and wobbled around aimlessly. Taking a left turn, she bumped into a huge vase which bounced her off to the right and into a decorative cabinet. The woman grimaced in pain but recovered quickly and began challenging an iron tree next to it.

With the high-definition camera, Arius was able to have a clear view of the bright purple blotches on Cathy's arms and legs from when they hit the flowerpot. On the other end of the screen was Adrian in his pajamas, watching the scene unfold with complete nonchalance. His arms were folded across his chest as he patiently waited for her to pass out, before getting up from his seat to carry her back to the room.

Arius' eyes widened in shock. Seeing Cathy's injuries this morning had his mind jumping to the worst conclusion: his father, who has never even touched a woman, somehow became violent all of a sudden. Who would've thought reality was much simpler, and mundane?

How disappointing...

"Look, Young Master Arius. Master Adrian had nothing to do with Lady Cathy's bruises." The butler sighed lightly. "They were but a result of her own drunkenness."

Pursing his lips, Arius hung his head in shame. But then, he turned to the man standing by the door with a solemn expression. "Even so, you're still at fault here. Why didn't you do anything to prevent Lady Cathy from hurting herself? Was she bumping into every corner conceivable?"

Adrian huffed with indifference. "I happened to notice a few bottles missing from the wine cabinet downstairs. As I recall, they were limited edition from the top wineries."

Arius' face paled. His father was never one to enjoy socializing, much less with women. Leading a life governed by extreme self-discipline, his hobbies were few and far between. But one thing he loved more than work was collecting famous wines and storing them in his cabinet for display, each one worth an unimaginable fortune.

The little boy bit his lip in as if thinking about something. Then, quickly turned on his heels, and attempted to make a run for it. "I've still got some stuff to do, see you later!"

"You said she's yours, hm?" Adrian caught up to his son in no time, crouching down to gently tug on his little body. "Men should be responsible for their own people."

Arius only grunted and squirmed in response, but his father's hold on him proved to be unyielding. Finally, he gave in and turned around with a scowl. "Mr. Bolton, aren't you wealthy enough to not be extorting money from your own son?"

Despite his complaints, Arius still fished out his phone to transfer a whopping 10k sum into Adrian's account. "Paying by installment," he grumbled, brushing his father's hand away before scurrying off on his little feet.

The butler watched as Arius' light-yellow shirt swayed lightly with his movements, mild astonishment plastered across his face. "It seems you've married the right woman, Master."

Adrian gave a slight nod, his gaze deep and pensive as it lingered in the direction where his son had long disappeared off to.

"Brother! Why did you give daddy my pocket money?!"

Amidst the children's toy-scattered room stood Abner looking a little more than displeased. His hands were on either side of his hips, feet spread apart and firmly planted to the ground in an assertive stance. "That's the money grandpa secretly gave me to buy a remote-control car!"

Arius folded his legs gracefully. "Daddy said to give him money or he'll kick Cathy out," he murmured, eyes full of sorrow. "Not that it matters to me, but you, on the other hand, would never be able to taste her cooking again."

Abner hesitated for a moment.

"Fine." As tempting as the remote-control car sounded, it couldn't compare to Cathy's culinary skills. Besides, food is an important necessity.

"The only problem is that daddy's wines are too expensive," Arius sighed, "Cathy drank several million worth of them last night. That's far more than both our pocket money combined."

Frowning, Abner paced around the room anxiously. That hefty sum of money could probably get him hundreds of his favorite remote-control cars.

A sudden idea hit him.

"Brother, why don't we start calling Cathy 'mommy' from now on? That might help daddy develop feelings for Cathy."

Arius' lips curled up into a sly grin, fingers stroking his chin and down to empty air as if touching a non-existent beard. "That could work. When a man is in love, his IQ drops below zero and he'll forget everything else, like money."

He glanced at his little brother, and with an affirmative nod, said, "Okay, let's do it."

Abner jumped up excitedly, "I'll start planning now. How to make daddy fall in love with Cathy... No, fall in love with mommy!"

Seeing his little brother's burst of enthusiasm brought a satisfied smile to his face. "Seems like you have a lot of ideas. You write them down first, I'll head downstairs."

The sound of running water and clacking dishware gradually became louder with every step towards the kitchen. As usual, Cathy was found busying herself with menial chores at the sink. It was a familiarity she found comfort in. Or more accurately, a force of habit she had developed from her hapless past.

Five years ago, upon finding out about her adoption status in the Shaw family, Cathy began taking on heavy chores around the house out of guilt. It wasn't so bad at the beginning, Dorian and Marion were courteous enough, constantly providing her reassurance of a place in the family, and that it wasn't a burden she needed to bear. But over time, things took a turn for the worse. The family began treating Cathy as a personal servant, even dismissing the other servants so that Cathy was the only one to handle the laborious day-to-day chores of the Shaw household.

"Come here."

A tiny hand dragged her out of the kitchen. "We have servants at home, you don't need to do that," Arius said, plopping her down onto the couch. He gave her a serious look and continued "You're not allowed to drink anymore. It's bad for your health."

As well as his and Abner's wallet.

Cathy pursed her lips sheepishly. "I don't normally drink."

And the only reason she drank herself silly was because she saw Xavier openly flirting with Willow yesterday. Just the sight of the two of them together made her blood boil.

After a long pause, she finally looked up at the boy with a feigned smile. "Well, that's all in the past now! I won't drink recklessly ever again."

Arius crossed his arms over his chest, staring straight into Cathy's eyes with big, sincere ones of his own. "Are you heartbroken?"

Cathy didn't reply, but Arius didn't miss the way her brows raised slightly at the question.

"It's written all over your face," he explained, voice soft and tender. "Ms. Shaw, you're a married woman. You shouldn't be thinking about your ex-boyfriend."

"I wasn't thinking of him!" she blurted out, a little too quickly.

Arius sighed. "Looks like you really are heartbroken."

It takes a fairly short amount of time for a brokenhearted woman to lose interest in a man. Seems like Mr. Bolton's pursuit of love would not be an easy one.

The little boy stood up from his seat and made his way lazily up the stairs, wailing melodramatically into the air, "I'm only so young, yet plagued with the responsibilities of an adult's lifelong affairs. How tiring."

After Arius left, Cathy wanted to resume her unfinished housework, but was hastily sent upstairs by one of the servants who caught her. Bored with nothing else to do, she pulled out the book she had brought with her and started reading. It wasn't until the sun began to set that Cathy set her book down, stretched herself and headed downstairs to prepare dinner for Arius.

Reaching the foot of the stairs, she was immediately greeted by Arius in his sportswear, standing at the door with his foot slipping midway into his shoes. He waved when he noticed her.

"5 to 6pm is the time I would go out for a walk. Want to come with?"

"I better not," Cathy smiled, "I'll be here cooking something delicious for when you get back."

"Okay." He nodded, before exiting the door with poise.

Cathy let out a sigh. That boy is too proud for his age, not at all like a five-year-old, she mused, walking into the kitchen.

A faint smell of shellfish caught her attention, alerting her of the bag of shrimps sitting on the kitchen counter. The servants must have bought it not too long ago seeing as they still looked fresh. Her lips curled up into a soft smile as she went over the recipes in her head. She was determined to make a good meal for Arius.

Even with the door closed, Abner could smell Cathy's cooking wafting its way in from the kitchen. Closing the "Guide to Love" book in his hands, he swung the door open and took a deep whiff, mouth watering at the tantalizing aroma.

I can't take it anymore! Brother had sportswear on before he went down, right?

He rushed to his wardrobe, donning the exact same outfit as his brother, and hurried down the stairs.

"What delicious meal are we having tonight?" Abner almost slipped and fell with how fast he was running. He reached the dining table just in time to see Cathy serving the dishes. "Wow!"

Cathy stared blankly at the "Arius" in front of her. If her eyes weren't playing tricks on her, didn't he just come from upstairs?